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In 2029, purpose has become scarce. AI systems design drugs, run grids, and spin entire worlds—worlds within worlds—while

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people drift through hyper-personalized feeds that no one else will ever see.

In this near-future San Francisco, Maya, an analyst for the second-generation AI giant Ocelus, keeps a private ledger. In it she marks the fragments of humanity she still notices: Gifts—authentic, unrepeatable acts—and the Scripts corporations try to sell in their place.

When a run inside the stack reveals a boy humming four notes as he codes patience into his agents, Maya faces an impossible choice: retire the simulation to preserve stability, or steal time to let his fragile purpose breathe. Her decision will ripple through ledgers, through nested worlds, and through the question her brother never stopped asking: *What's it for?*

Gift. Script is a novel about purpose in the age of intelligent machines. About the space between what we automate and what we mean. About the fear and courage of standing alone—whether as a jazz musician mid-solo, a demolition worker swinging a hammer, or a coder writing rules that feel more like kindness than code.

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For readers of *Never Let Me Go* and *Exhalation*, this story is at once intimate and sweeping, a mirror to our present moment and a warning of how close the future already is.

In a future where AI runs whole simulated worlds, a young operator keeps a secret ledger of humanity's smallest gifts as her own world starts to resemble the ones she retires.

Gift. Script is a near-future novel about a woman searching for purpose in a world where AI runs everything—and discovering that meaning survives only in the fragile moments we refuse to script.